

THE HAND OF

# FATE

NOV.  
10c

WHAT STRANGE SPELL HAVE YOU PUT  
ON ME, YOU EVIL WITCH ? SOMETHING  
IS STRANGLING ME... SQUEEZING  
THE LIFE FROM ME... BUT I  
CAN'T SEE ANYTHING !







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# "There's no such animal,"

he cried!



MY FRIEND and I were picking the ponies one day when I started telling him about a *sure thing* I heard about.

"You say it pays four bucks for every three?" he asked.

"Yep," I replied.

"And can't lose? It *automatically* wins? Must be illegal!"

"Not a bit," I replied. "In fact, the government very much approves..."

"Our government approves of a horse who can't lose..."

"Who said anything about a horse?" I asked.

"So what else could it be but a horse...?"

"It not only could be—but is—U.S. Savings Bonds," was my prompt reply. "The surest thing running on any track today.

"For every three dollars you invest in U.S. Savings Bonds you get four dollars back after only ten years. And if you're a member of the Payroll Savings Plan—which means you buy bonds *automatically* from your paycheck—that can amount to an awful lot of money when you're not looking. Hey, what are you doing?"

"Tearing up my racing form! The horse I'm betting on from now on is U.S. Savings Bonds."

## Automatic saving is sure saving—U.S. Savings Bonds

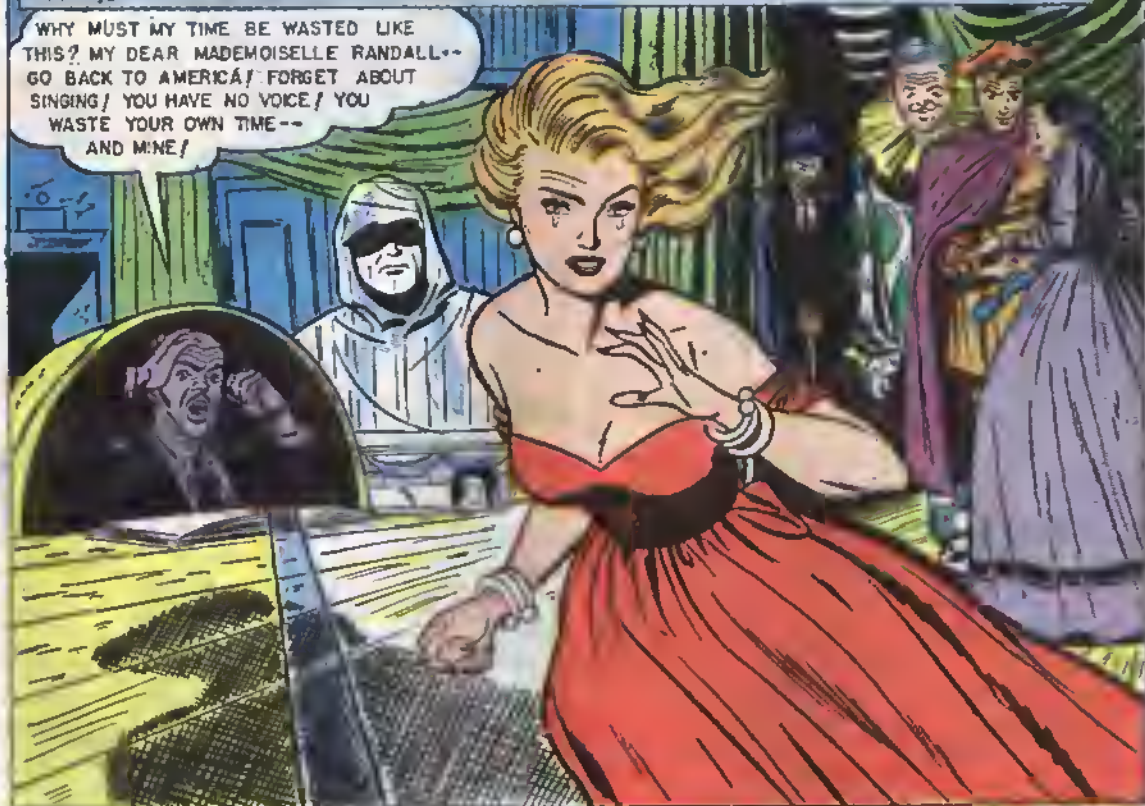


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# The SPIRITS Sing Tonight

OUT OF THE DARKNESS SURROUNDING LIFE, POWERS LURKING AT OUR SIDE MAY SUDDENLY REVEAL THEMSELVES, AND WE ARE HELPLESS IN THEIR HANDS, EXPOSED TO ALL THE UNKNOWN POSSIBILITIES OF A SINISTER UNSEEN WORLD. JEAN RANDALL, A YOUNG AMERICAN GIRL WHO CAME TO PARIS TO CONTINUE HER STUDIES TO BE A SINGER, HAD BEGUN TO FEEL THESE STRANGE INFLUENCES IN HER GLOOMY LITTLE ATTIC STUDIO ROOM IN MONTMARTRE, BUT NOT UNTIL THE DAY OF HER HUMILIATING FAILURE, WHEN SHE TRIED OUT FOR THE CHORUS OF AN OPERA COMPANY, DID THE EVIL FORCE REALLY BEGIN TO OPERATE IN HER AFFAIRS.

WHY MUST MY TIME BE WASTED LIKE THIS? MY DEAR MADEMOISELLE RANDALL-- GO BACK TO AMERICA! FORGET ABOUT SINGING! YOU HAVE NO VOICE! YOU WASTE YOUR OWN TIME-- AND MINE!



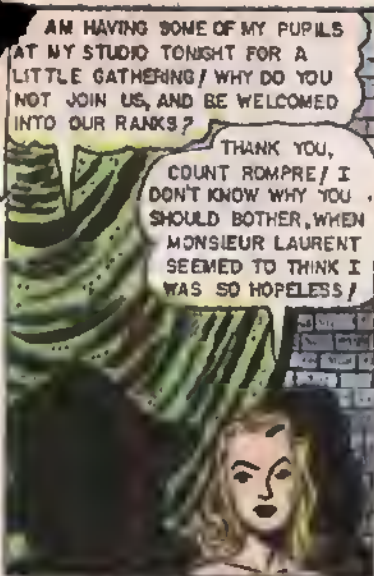
I BELIEVE WE LIVE IN THE SAME BUILDING IN THE RUE DE FAUBOURG, MADEMOISELLE! I HAVE LIVED THERE MANY YEARS, AND I HAVE HELPED MANY YOUNG SINGERS WHO HAVE BEEN REGARDED BY OTHERS AS FAILURES!

I AM A FAILURE! MY MONEY IS GONE, AND SO ARE MY DREAMS OF BEING A REAL SINGER!

MY NAME IS COUNT ROMPRE! I ASSURE YOU, MY CHILD, IF YOU PUT YOURSELF IN MY HANDS, I WILL MAKE YOU A GREAT SINGER!







AM HAVING SOME OF MY PUPILS  
AT MY STUDIO TONIGHT FOR A  
LITTLE GATHERING / WHY DO YOU  
NOT JOIN US, AND BE WELCOMED  
INTO OUR RANKS?

THANK YOU,  
COUNT ROMPRE / I  
DON'T KNOW WHY YOU  
SHOULD BOTHER, WHEN  
MONSIEUR LAURENT  
SEEMED TO THINK I  
WAS SO HOPELESS!

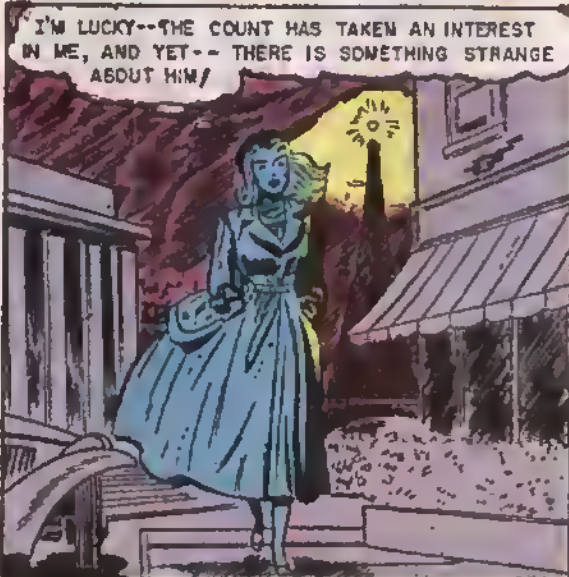


IT IS THE HOPELESS ONES I  
FIND IT EASIEST TO TAKE UNDER  
MY WING, MADEMOISELLE / SO I  
SHALL EXPECT YOU TONIGHT /  
MY STUDIO IS DIRECTLY UNDER  
YOUR OWN!

I-I'LL BE  
THERE!



AU REVOIR, THEN, FOR THE PRESENT /  
I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT ELSE-  
WHERE, BUT I SHALL SEE YOU  
TONIGHT-- AT MIDNIGHT!



I'M LUCKY--THE COUNT HAS TAKEN AN INTEREST  
IN ME, AND YET-- THERE IS SOMETHING STRANGE  
ABOUT HIM!



I'VE FELT IT EACH TIME I'VE PASSED HIM  
ON THE STAIRS / I GET A SORT OF COLD CHILL /  
AND WHEN I PASS THE CLOSED DOOR OF HIS  
STUDIO, I HEAR BEAUTIFUL VOICES SINGING FROM  
THERE, BUT THEY MAKE ME FEEL FUNNY!



N'D, JEAN-- YOUR FEELING ABOUT  
THE COUNT WAS NOT YOUR IMAGI-  
NATION / YOU SHOULD SEE HIM NOW  
AS HE KEEPS HIS "APPOINTMENT" /  
PERHAPS YOU OUGHT TO PACK UP,  
JEAN, AND RETURN TO AMERICA,  
AND SAFETY, WHILE THERE IS STILL TIME!



I MUST ASSEMBLE  
THE GUESTS FOR MY  
PARTY!



COME FORTH, GEORGES  
DES MOREAU / TONIGHT  
YOU SING AGAIN!

YES,  
MASTER!



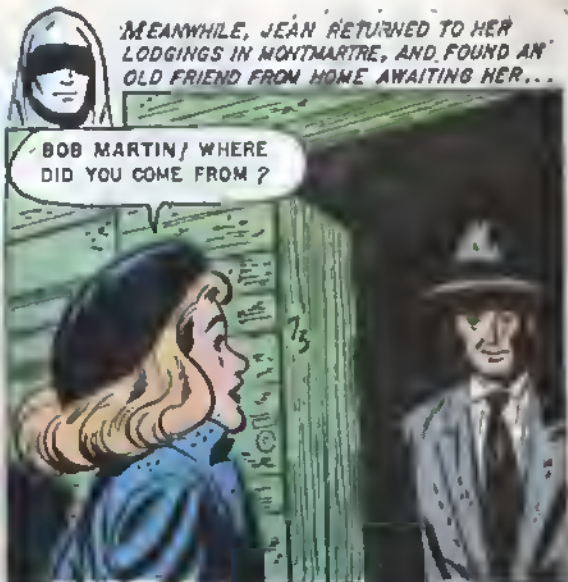
FROM TOMB TO TOMB, AND GRAVE TO GRAVE, THE COUNT SUMMONED HIS GRAUESOME GUESTS!



COME FORTH, CELESTE D'AVRIL / TONIGHT YOU SHALL AGAIN SING THE SONGS YOU LOVED SO WELL!

YES, MASTER!

MEANWHILE, JEAN RETURNED TO HER LODGINGS IN MONTMARTRE, AND FOUND AN OLD FRIEND FROM HOME AWAITING HER...



BOB MARTIN / WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?

I CAME FROM THE GOOD OLD U.S.A., OF COURSE--JUST TO SEE YOU / LOOK, HONEY--GIVE UP THIS IDEA OF A SINGING CAREER, AND COME BACK HOME AND MARRY ME!

NO! IF I GIVE UP NOW, I'D ALWAYS FEEL THAT I'D PASSED UP SOMETHING THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN MY BIG OPPORTUNITY!



YOU CERTAINLY COULDN'T ENJOY LIVING IN THIS MOULDY, CREEPY JOINT!



IT'S ARTISTIC / A LOT OF FAMOUS SINGERS AND COMPOSERS USED TO LIVE HERE!

AND A REAL COUNT LIVES RIGHT HERE IN THE STUDIO ROOM UNDER MINE / HE'S A MUSICAL IMPRESARIO, AND HE'S OFFERED TO TAKE OVER MY CAREER / HE'S GIVING A PARTY TONIGHT TO INTRODUCE ME TO SOME FAMOUS SINGERS!



THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PLACE THAT MAKES MY FLESH CRAWL, BUT IF THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT, YOU'RE WELCOME TO IT!

BOB, I WISH YOU'D GO TO THE PARTY--WITH ME TONIGHT / IF YOU MEET SOME REAL SINGERS, MAYBE YOU'LL UNDERSTAND BETTER WHAT I HOPE TO BE!



OKAY, I'LL STAY FOR THE PARTY / I'D LIKE TO GIVE THIS COUNT THE ONCE-OVER / HE SOUNDS LIKE A PHONY TO ME, AND YOU MAY BE GETTING INTO SOMETHING YOU CAN'T HANDLE!







JEAN DID NOT ADMIT TO BOB HER OWN FOREBODING ABOUT COUNT ROMPRE, BECAUSE SHE WAS NOW STUBBORNLY DETERMINED TO ACCEPT THE COUNT'S OFFER, BUT SHE WAS GLAD THAT BOB WAS THERE TO GO TO THE COUNT'S PARTY WITH HER. WHEN THEY RAPPED ON THE COUNT'S DOOR AT MIDNIGHT...



I BROUGHT A FRIEND! I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND!

YOUR FRIEND IS WELCOME! I AM SURE HE WILL ENJOY HIMSELF!

LET ME INTRODUCE MY FRIENDS--AND PUPILS! EVERYONE HERE DESIRED A SINGING CAREER, AND FOUND IT THROUGH ME! GEORGES DES MOREAU, CELESTE D'AVRIL, ROLAND GREGORY, MADAME VIERDOT...

JUST A MINUTE...



YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF FAKES DRESSED UP HERE-- BECAUSE GEORGES DES MOREAU AND CELESTE D'AVRIL HAVE BEEN DEAD AT LEAST A HUNDRED YEARS!



IMBECILE! YOU DARE CALL US DEAD? COUNT ROMPRE HAS MADE US IMMORTAL! FOR THAT INSULT YOU SHALL PAY!

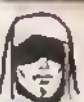


IMMORTAL! IMMORTAL!

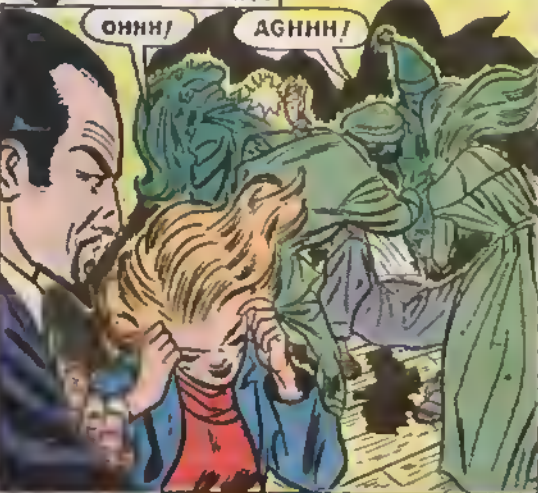
IT - IT'S LIKE HITTING SOFT CLAY! WHAT! HE'S TURNING INTO A CORPSE!



EEEEEEK!



WHEN SHE DARED LOOK, THE SIGHT WAS MORE THAN JEAN COULD STAND, AND SHE FAINTED AWAY...

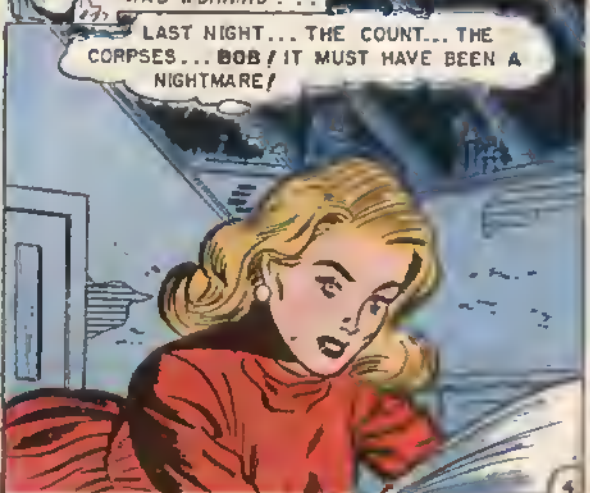


OH!!!

AGHHH!



WHEN JEAN WOKE UP, SHE WAS IN HER OWN LITTLE GLOOMY ATTIC ROOM, AND IT WAS MORNING...



LAST NIGHT... THE COUNT... THE CORPSES... BOB! IT MUST HAVE BEEN A NIGHTMARE!

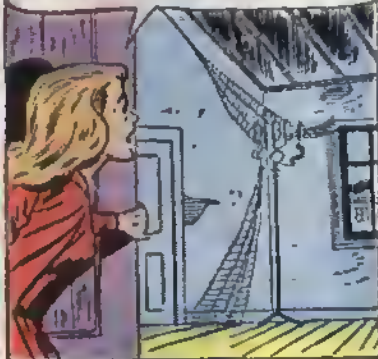


SUCH THINGS DON'T HAPPEN,  
BUT IT SEEMED SO REAL!



JEAN FORCED HERSELF TO  
RAP ON THE COUNT'S DOOR.  
WHEN THERE WAS NO  
ANSWER, SHE DARED TRY  
THE DOOR. IT OPENED...

WHY, IT'S EMPTY! COBWEBS!  
DUST! IT LOOKS AS THOUGH NO  
ONE HAD LIVED HERE FOR YEARS!



WERE YOU  
LOOKING FOR  
ME, MY DEAR?

EYAH HHH!  
I-I DON'T  
UNDERSTAND THIS!  
I MUST GET  
AWAY!



JEAN RUSHED FOR THE STAIRS. SHE  
TRIPPED, AND BUMPED HER HEAD...



THROUGH THE DARKNESS, SHE SEEMED TO  
SEE THE COUNT'S SINISTER MOCKING FACE  
AND THE STRANGE HEADS OF DEATH SHE  
HAD SEEN BEFORE...



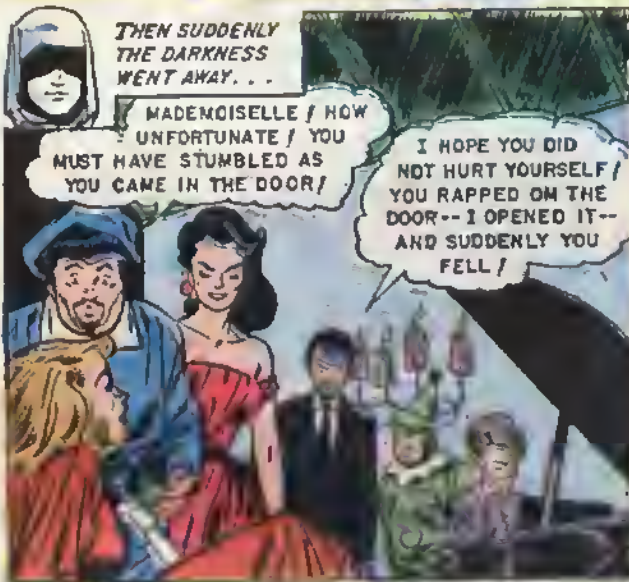
THEN SUDDENLY  
THE DARKNESS  
WENT AWAY...

MADemoiselle! HOW  
UNFORTUNATE! YOU  
MUST HAVE STUMBLED AS  
YOU CAME IN THE DOOR!

I HOPE YOU DID  
NOT HURT YOURSELF!  
YOU RAPPED ON THE  
DOOR-- I OPENED IT--  
AND SUDDENLY YOU  
FELL!

NO! NO! I-I CAME  
HERE LAST NIGHT, WITH  
BOB! DREADFUL THINGS  
HAPPENED! TODAY-- I  
CAME-- THERE WAS  
NOTHING HERE!

MY DEAR, I  
INVITED YOU TO  
A PARTY AT MID-  
NIGHT! IT IS MID-  
NIGHT, AND YOU  
CAME! YOU WERE  
NEVER HERE  
BEFORE!







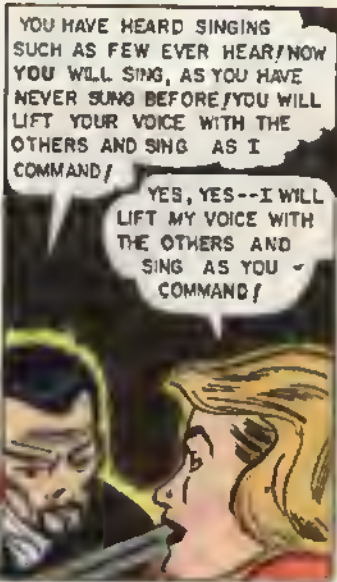
BUT I REMEMBER--I CAME HOME--IT WAS LAST NIGHT--BOB WAS HERE--OH, I'M CONFUSED!

PERHAPS SOME MUSIC WILL SOOTHE YOU/COME--LET US SING!



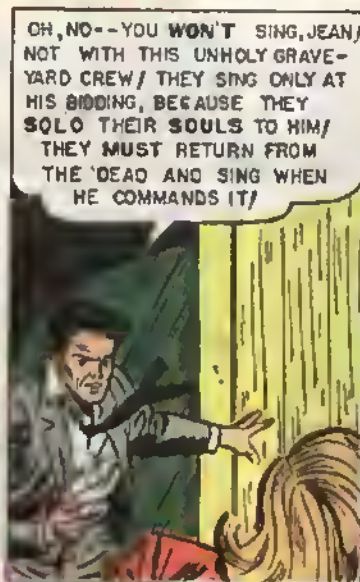
AAA AHH  
AHH H H

THE VOICES--THEY ARE THE ONES I USED TO HEAR FROM HERE--BEAUTIFUL, BUT SOMENOW TERRIFYING--MOLLOW--AS THOUGH THEY CAME FROM THE GRAVE!



YOU HAVE HEARD SINGING SUCH AS FEW EVER HEAR/ NOW YOU WILL SING, AS YOU HAVE NEVER SUNG BEFORE/ YOU WILL LIFT YOUR VOICE WITH THE OTHERS AND SING AS I COMMAND!

YES, YES--I WILL LIFT MY VOICE WITH THE OTHERS AND SING AS YOU - COMMAND!



OH, NO--YOU WON'T SING, JEAN/ NOT WITH THIS UNHOLY GRAVEYARD CREW/ THEY SING ONLY AT HIS BIDDING, BECAUSE THEY SOLO THEIR SOULS TO HIM/ THEY MUST RETURN FROM THE DEAD AND SING WHEN HE COMMANDS IT!



I THOUGHT YOU HAD DESTROYED HIM LAST NIGHT/ DESTROY HIM NOW!

YOUR CREATURES DRAGGED ME TO THE CEMETERY, BUT BEFORE THEY COULD PULL ME INTO ONE OF THEIR GRAVES, DAWN CAME, AND THEY HAD TO LEAVE ME!



MASTER/ SAVE US/ WE ARE DOOMED!



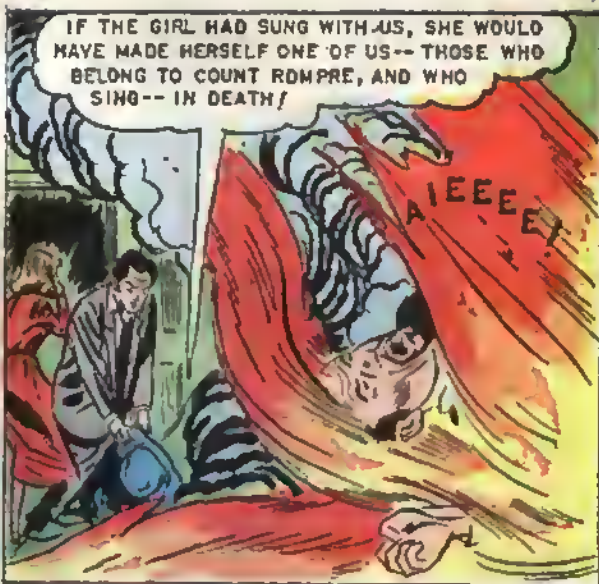
THE COUNT CAN'T SAVE YOU OR HIMSELF NOW/ YOU'RE DOOMED--AS YOU WERE DOOMED WHEN YOU GOT INTO HIS CLUTCHES WHEN YOU WERE ALIVE/ NOW--EXPLAIN WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!



...WHEN THE COUNT CALLS US FROM THE GRAVE TO SING AGAIN, IT IS ALL WE HAVE! WE HAVE TRIED TO TELL OURSELVES HE HAS MADE US IMMORTAL, BUT WE KNOW WE ARE NOTHING BUT THE EVIL CREATURES HE USES TO SNARE OTHER AMBITIOUS FOOLS!



IF THE GIRL HAD SUNG WITH US, SHE WOULD HAVE MADE HERSELF ONE OF US-- THOSE WHO BELONG TO COUNT ROMPRE, AND WHO SING-- IN DEATH!



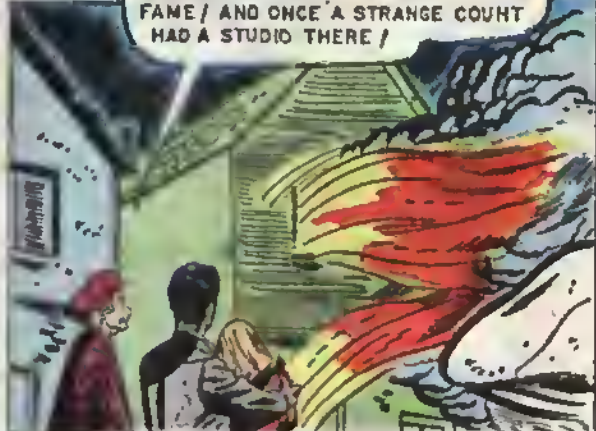
AS THE FLAMES TURNED THE ROOM INTO A RAGING INFERNO, BOB FOUGHT HIS WAY TO THE DOOR. THE WHOLE WOODEN STRUCTURE WAS NOW AFLAME, AND BEHIND THEM THEY SEEMED TO HEAR A FINAL WEIRD DEATH--SONG OF AGONY...



REACHING THE SAFETY OF THE STREET, BOB AND JEAN WATCHED THE PLACE BURN...



MANY STRUGGLING YOUNG SINGERS HAVE LIVED IN THAT HOUSE! SOME OF THEM STARVED TO DEATH-- SOME ACHIEVED FAME! AND ONCE A STRANGE COUNT HAD A STUDIO THERE!

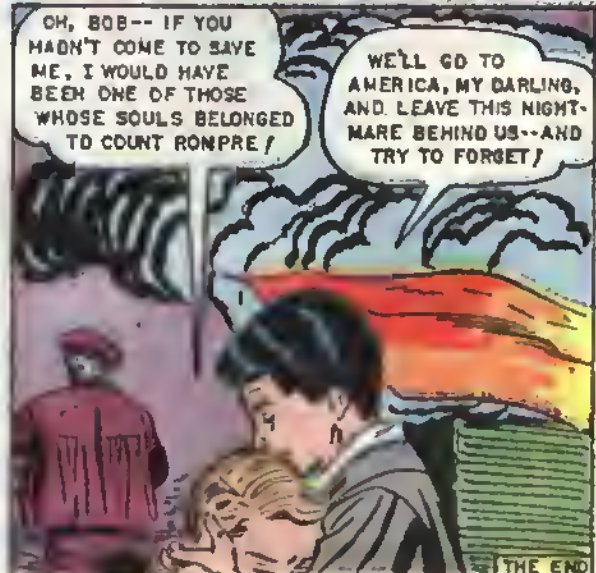


IT WAS ALMOST A HUNDRED YEARS AGO! HIS NAME WAS COUNT ROMPRE, AND GOSSIP SAID HE WAS ONE OF THE DEVIL'S BAND, WITH STRANGE, EVIL POWERS THAT PREYED UPON AMBITIOUS SINGERS! THE PEOPLE HERE DROVE HIM AWAY! HIS STUDIO HAS BEEN EMPTT ALL THESE YEARS! THEY SAY HE STILL VISITED THE HOUSE AND USED THE STUDIO, BUT I SUPPOSE THAT'S JUST SUPERSTITIOUS GOSSIP!



OH, BOB-- IF YOU HADN'T COME TO SAVE ME, I WOULD HAVE BEEN ONE OF THOSE WHOSE SOULS BELONGED TO COUNT ROMPRE!

WE'LL GO TO AMERICA, MY DARLING, AND LEAVE THIS NIGHTMARE BEHIND US--AND TRY TO FORGET!



THE END



# A Hand of FATE Mystery

#14

ONE OF THE WEIRDEST EVENTS EVER TO OCCUR IN EUROPE IS RECORDED IN THE FILES OF THE PARIS POLICE. IN OCTOBER, 1927, A MURDERING MADMAN ROAMED THE STREETS OF PARIS, PREYING ON INNOCENT PEOPLE. THE POLICE WERE ON A CONSTANT MAN-HUNT FOR THE KILLER, BUT HE ALWAYS MANAGED TO ELUDE THEM. BUT ONE NIGHT, TWO GENDARMES HAPPENED UPON THE MURDERER IN THE ACT OF COMMITTING A CRIME...



LOOK! THE KILLER! HE'S SLAIN ANOTHER VICTIM!

HE WON'T ESCAPE THIS TIME! AFTER HIM!



THE POLICE CHASED THE ASSASSIN THROUGH THE WINDING STREETS, UNTIL FINALLY...

HE'S GOING INTO THAT WAX MUSEUM OF CRIME! WE'VE TRAPPED HIM!

WAX MUSEUM OF CRIME



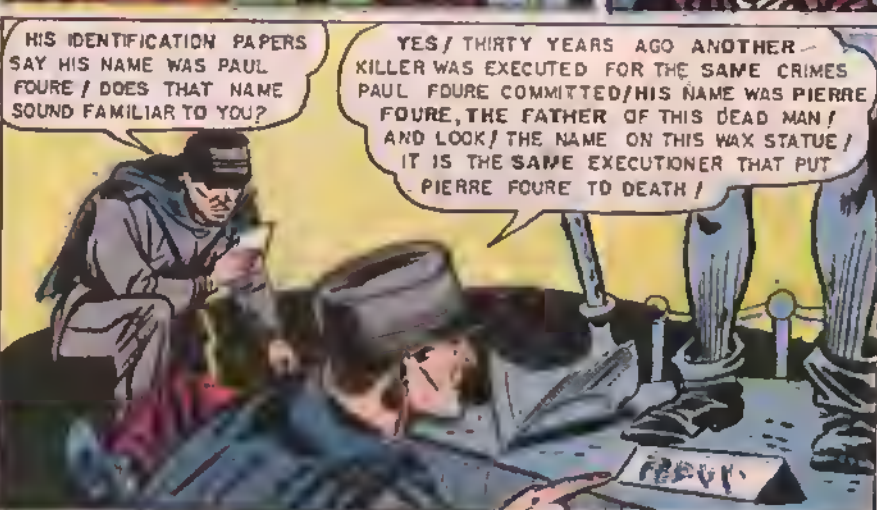
INSIDE THE MUSEUM, THE POLICE OFFICERS WITNESSED AN AWESOME SIGHT...

HE'S HIDING NEAR THAT WAX STATUE OVER THERE!

LOOK! THAT STATUE OF THE EXECUTIONER! IT'S MOVING!



WITH A MIGHTY SWEEP, THE STATUE BROUGHT ITS BLADE DOWN ON THE NECK OF THE KILLER CROUCHED BEFORE IT!



HIS IDENTIFICATION PAPERS SAY HIS NAME WAS PAUL FOURE! DOES THAT NAME SOUND FAMILIAR TO YOU?

YES! THIRTY YEARS AGO ANOTHER KILLER WAS EXECUTED FOR THE SAME CRIMES PAUL FOURE COMMITTED! HIS NAME WAS PIERRE FOURE, THE FATHER OF THIS DEAD MAN! AND LOOK! THE NAME ON THIS WAX STATUE! IT IS THE SAME EXECUTIONER THAT PUT PIERRE FOURE TO DEATH!

WHEN THE PEOPLE OF PARIS LEARNED OF THIS STRANGE COINCIDENCE, THEY WERE AMAZED! MANY BELIEVED THAT THE HAND OF FATE HAD SPANNED THE LONG YEARS TO BRING JUSTICE TO A KILLER AT THE HANDS OF A WAX EXECUTIONER, WHO, THIRTY YEARS BEFORE, HAD CARRIED OUT THE DEATH PENALTY ON HIS FATHER. THE CASE WAS CLOSED AND FILED IN THE BAFFLING CRIMES RECORDS OF THE PARIS POLICE!

THE END







OH! IT WAS THE MOST LOATHSOME THING I  
EVER SAW -- AND IT WAS CRAWLING OUT OF THE  
GRAVE!



I HEARD SOME-  
BODY SCREAM!  
SOMETHING  
WRONG, MISS?



TH- THERE!  
LOOK!

WHAT THE...!



KATE SAW THE COBRA WIND ITSELF AROUND THE HELP-  
LESS MAN...

HELP!  
AGH HHHH!

IT- IT'S TOO HORRIBLE!  
I CAN'T LOOK!



OH, THAT POOR MAN! AND  
THERE IS NO ONE AROUND TO  
HELP! I'VE GOT TO GET HELP  
FOR HIM!



KATE DROVE INTO TOWN AND WENT  
RIGHT TO YATES' OFFICE...

YATES--QUICK--YOU MUST COME  
BACK WITH ME TO THE CEMETERY!  
A COBRA--CRAWLING OUT OF YOUR  
WIFE RAE'S GRAVE/IT ATTACKED  
ONE OF THE CEMETERY  
WORKERS!

A-A  
COBRA?



WHY DO YOU  
HAVE TO KEEP  
GOING TO RAE'S  
GRAVE, ANYHOW?  
I WANT TO FOR-  
GET SHE EVER  
EXISTED!

I-I DON'T  
UNDERSTAND!  
YOU MARRIED  
HER! NOW  
THAT SHE'S  
DEAD, IT DOES  
NOT SEEM FAIR  
TO JUST LEAVE  
HER THERE  
ALONE!





WE'VE GOT TO GO SOMETHING ABOUT THE COBRA!

FORGIVE ME FOR BEING UPSET, DARLING! BUT VISITING RAE'S GRAVE HAS MADE YOU HYSTERICAL. YOU KNOW YOU JUST IMAGINED SEEING A COBRA!



IT WASN'T MY IMAGINATION! IT'S THERE, I TELL YOU! AND THAT POOR MAN IS PROBABLY BEYOND HELP NOW! I'LL GET A RESCUE PARTY TO GO BACK WITH ME, IF YOU WON'T DO ANYTHING!

I'LL GO WITH YOU, KATE-- BUT WE MUST NOT ALARM THE TOWN! I'LL GO WITH YOU AND TAKE MY GUN!



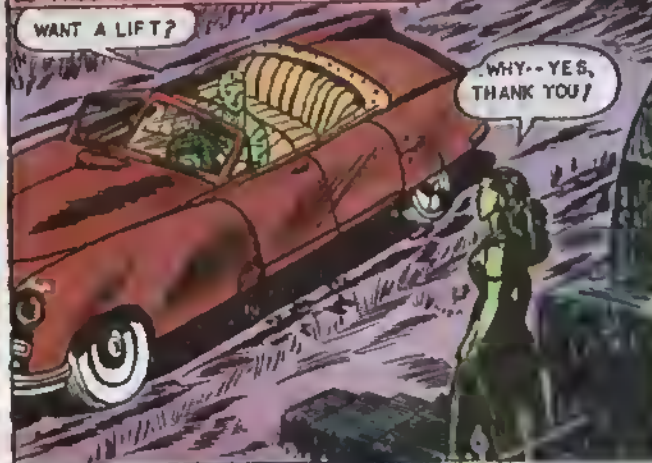
IT WAS HARD FOR KATE TO UNDERSTAND YATES' STRANGE ATTITUDE AND HIS WANTING TO KEEP HER STORY ABOUT THE COBRA FROM THE TOWN. WHILE HE AND KATE STARTED BACK TO THE CEMETERY, THE EVIL MONSTER LAZILY UNWOUND ITS COILS FROM ITS VICTIM...



AND A FEW MINUTES LATER, A BEAUTIFUL GIRL STOOD AT THE CEMETERY GATES, WAITING TO GET A RIDE INTO TOWN. IT WAS FATED THAT THIS PARTICULAR YOUNG MAN SHOULD BE PASSING BY AT THAT MOMENT...

WANT A LIFT?

WHY-- YES, THANK YOU!



YOU'RE A STRANGER IN TOWN, AREN'T YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE AT THE CEMETERY?

SOMEONE WHO WAS VERY CLOSE TO ME IS BURIED THERE!



MY NAME IS GEORGE BRIGHAM! ARE YOU STAYING WITH SOMEONE HERE IN TOWN? I HOPE YOU'LL LET ME SEE YOU AGAIN!

THAT WOULD BE VERY NICE! I SHALL BE STAYING WITH A YOUNG LADY NAMED KATE SEFTON. GO YOU KNOW HER?



KATE SEFTON? SHE'S GOING TO MARRY MY BEST FRIEND IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS! YATES ZACHARY AND I WERE BOTH CRAZY ABOUT KATE, BUT YATES ALWAYS HAD THE INSIDE TRACK, UNTIL HE WENT TO INDIA AND MARRIED SOME OTHER GIRL! THEN IT LOOKED LIKE I MIGHT HAVE A CHANCE! BUT YATES CAME BACK A WIDOWER, AND I LOST HER AGAIN!





WHEN KATE AND YATES GOT BACK TO THE CEMETERY...

OH, HOW DREADFUL / I KNEW WE WOULD BE TOO LATE / YATES--IT'S ONLY FAIR TO LET PEOPLE KNOW THAT SOMETHING DANGEROUS AND HORRIBLE IS LOOSE IN THEIR MIDST /



KATE--GO ON HOME AND LET ME LOOK FOR THIS THING / AND DON'T SAY ANYTHING TO ANYONE ABOUT IT / I UNDERSTAND COBRAS / I LEARNED A LOT ABOUT THEM

IN INDIA / OH, YATES--DO YOU SUPPOSE IT SOMEHOW GOT INTO YOUR WIFE'S COFFIN AND JUST NOW GOT LOOSE ?



KATE HAD NEVER SEEN YATES LIKE THIS / IT WAS AS THOUGH HE HAD SUDDENLY GONE INSANE WITH RAGE AND FEAR /

GO HOME, YOU SILLY LITTLE FOOL / AND KEEP YOUR MOUTH CLOSED /



TERRIFIED AND UPSET, KATE WENT HOME, WHERE SHE FOUND A VISITOR AWAITING HER...

WHY--WHO ARE YOU?



I'M A FRIEND OF YATES ZACHARY / I KNEW HIS WIFE VERY WELL /

HOW STRANGE THAT YOU SHOULD COME TODAY / TELL ME ABOUT YATES' WIFE / WHAT WAS SHE LIKE ?



SHE WAS LIKE-- THIS / ZHJ / ZHJ /



WHY, KATE -- WHERE ARE YOU RUSHING TO? I BROUGHT A BEAUTIFUL GIRL TO YOUR HOUSE AWHILE AGO, AND SHE PROMISED ME A DATE TONIGHT / BUT SHE DIDN'T GIVE ME HER NAME /

OH, GEORGE / I... SHE ...









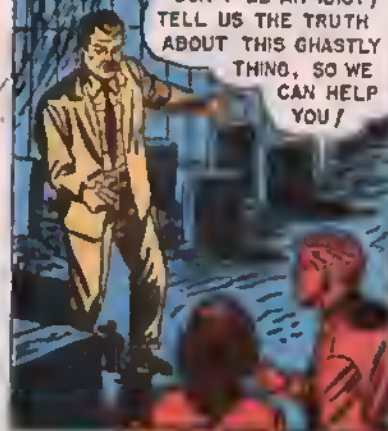
SOON...

SO YOU CAME BACK, KATE--  
AND BROUGHT GEORGE WITH YOU/  
INTERFERING FOOLS! GET OUT,  
BEFORE I SHOOT YOU!

DON'T BE AN IDIOT!  
TELL US THE TRUTH  
ABOUT THIS GHASTLY  
THING, SO WE  
CAN HELP  
YOU!

THE TRUTH IS--I MARRIED  
A GIRL WITH THE SOUL OF  
A COBRA! NOT UNTIL WE  
WERE MARRIED DID I  
REALIZE THAT SHE WAS A  
SHE-DEVIL WHO COULD CHANGE  
AT WILL INTO A POISONOUS  
SNAKE! SHE KILLED PEOPLE  
BEFORE MY EYES, AND I KNEW  
I WOULD BE NEXT!

"AND SO, ONE NIGHT, WHEN SHE  
SLEPT IN HUMAN FORM, I STRAN-  
GLED HER AND NAILED HER INTO  
A COFFIN! I DARED NOT LEAVE  
THE COFFIN BEHIND, SO I BROUGHT  
IT HERE WITH ME, NEVER DREAM-  
ING THAT HER EVIL POWER STILL  
REMAINED! AND NOW, SOMEHOW,  
SHE HAS FREED HERSELF!"



NOW, YOU TWO KNOW MY HORRIBLE SECRET!  
IT WILL DIE WITH YOU!

YATES!  
NO!



SORRY, OLD MAN--BUT YOU  
AREN'T KILLING ANYONE!

ON!



YATES--WHY NOT  
LET US HELP YOU  
FIGHT THIS THING?

IT--IT'S TOO HOR-  
RIBLE! I NEVER  
WANTED ANYONE  
TO KNOW!

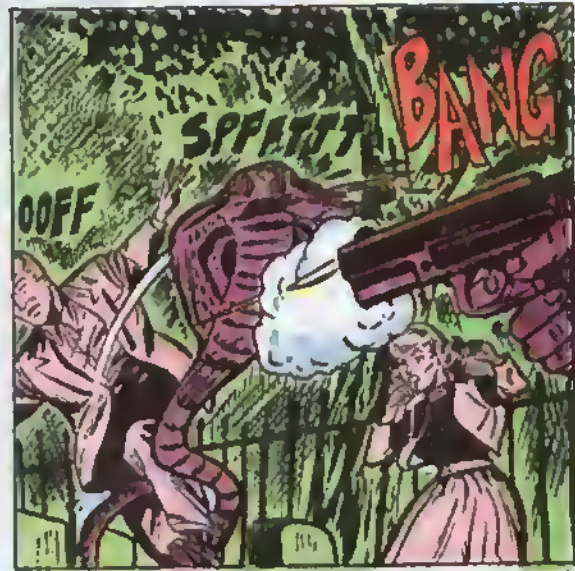


AHHH!  
HELP!

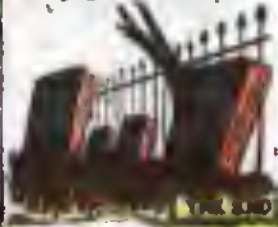
MY GUN! WHERE IS  
MY GUN?







THE EMPTY COFFIN OF YATES' WIFE ONCE MORE HAD AN OCCUPANT, THE LIFELESS BODY OF THE COBRA! THIS TIME IT WOULD RISE NO MORE TO SPREAD EVIL DESTRUCTION NOR WOULD IT BE LONELY, BECAUSE NOW THE BODY OF THE MAN WHO HAD MARRIED THE COBRA GIRL RESTED BESIDE HER, HIS UNHAPPY ADVENTURE WITH THE MYSTERIOUS FORCES OF THE UNKNOWN OVER AT LAST!





# NO ESCAPE *from* NIGHTMARE

AT LAST/ AFTER YEARS OF STUDY AND PRACTICE, I HAVE LEARNED TO SEPARATE MY MIND AND BODY-- AND THIS ASTRAL BODY CAN GO WHERE-- EVER I SEND IT!

DEATH, TOIL AND IGNORANCE OF THE FUTURE ARE THE FATE OF MAN UPON THIS SPHERE, BUT THROUGH THE AGES HE HAS SOUGHT TO CHEAT DEATH, TO FIND WEALTH AND EASE WITHOUT WORKING FOR IT, AND TO TEAR AWAY THE VEIL THAT SHROUDS THE SECRETS OF THE UNKNOWN WORLD BEYOND. THOSE WHO TAMPER WITH FATE, AND SEEK TO OBTAIN KNOWLEDGE AND POWER THROUGH SUPERNATURAL SOURCES, UNLEASH STRANGE FORCES. THUS WE SEE PROFESSOR RAMON BLAGDON, A TEACHER OF PSYCHOLOGY IN AN OBSCURE COLLEGE, AS HE EMBARKED UPON A FORMIDABLE ADVENTURE...

BEWARE, RAMON BLAGDON / YOU ARE TREADING AN UN- NATURAL AND DANGEROUS PATH /

AHA/ ALREADY THE POWER I HAVE BUILT UP WITHIN MY MIND IS PIERCING THE MYSTERY OF THINGS HIDDEN FROM ORDINARY MORTALS / WHO ARE YOU THAT SPEAKS TO ME? FROM WHAT WORLD DO YOU COME?

DEMONOLOG

DIVINATION

MERLIN

MAGIC

I AM FATE / I BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT, HOLDING IN MY GRASP THE SKEINS OF EACH MAN'S DESTINY / WHEN THE THREADS BECOME TANGLED AND KNOTTED, IT MEANS THE MAN IS FIGHTING THAT WHICH HAS BEEN ORDAINED AND CANNOT BE CHANGED /



BEFORE THE THREADS  
BREAK, I ATTEMPT TO  
WARN MEN THAT FATE  
METES OUT PUNISHMENT  
TO THOSE THAT FIGHT  
ME/ I AM WARNING  
YOU!

THE FACT  
THAT I CAN  
STAND FACE TO  
FACE WITH YOU,  
SHOWS THAT I  
AM NO ORDINARY  
MAN!

I SHALL LEARN TO  
CONTROL NATURAL  
AND SUPERNATURAL  
FORCES/ IT CAN BE  
DONE/ I, TOO, SHALL  
BRIDGE THE GAP BE-  
TWEEN THIS WORLD  
AND THE NEXT/ I WILL  
LEARN WHAT DESTINY  
HAS ORDAINED FOR  
ME--AND CHANGE IT  
--TO SUIT MYSELF!

AS A TEACHER,  
YOU COULD BE  
A FORCE OF  
6000 / WHY  
DO YOU  
CHOOSE  
EVIL?

I HAVE WASTED  
ENOUGH YEARS TEACH-  
ING PSYCHOLOGY IN OB-  
SCURE LITTLE COLLEGES/  
WHEN I BEGAN SECRETLY  
STUDYING OCCULT SCIENCES,  
I WAS SEEKING THIS POWER  
THAT GIVES ME COMPLETE  
CONTROL OVER MY OWN LIFE  
AND THE LIVES OF OTHERS!



YOU WILL REGRET YOUR  
COURSE, RAMON BLAGDON/ BUT  
YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO DISREGARD  
MY WARNING, AND SO-- WE  
SHALL MEET AGAIN!



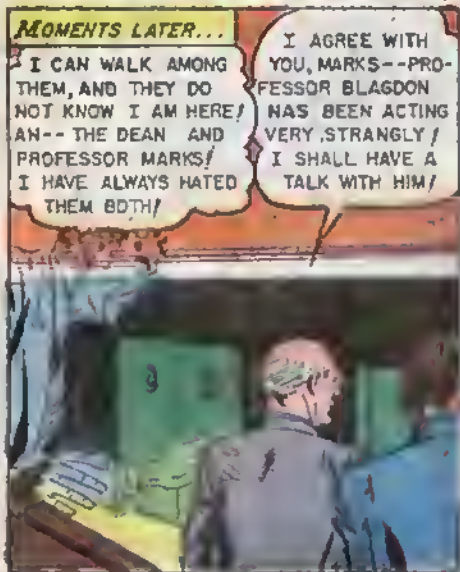
HE HAS GONE/ EVEN FATE  
KNOWS WHEN HE HAS MET HIS MATCH/  
NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT I CAN DO,  
NOTHING SHALL STOP ME!



MOMENTS LATER...

I CAN WALK AMONG  
THEM, AND THEY DO  
NOT KNOW I AM HERE!  
AN-- THE DEAN AND  
PROFESSOR MARKS/  
I HAVE ALWAYS HATED  
THEM BOTH!

I AGREE WITH  
YOU, MARKS--PRO-  
FESSOR BLAGDON  
HAS BEEN ACTING  
VERY STRANGELY/  
I SHALL HAVE A  
TALK WITH HIM!



A SUDDEN PUSH, AND...

POOR, IGNORANT FOOLS/ THERE  
ARE MANY SUCH I WILL DELIGHT IN  
GETTING RID OF/ AND NO ONE WILL  
EVER DREAM I HAD ANYTHING TO DO  
WITH IT/ HA/ HA/

NO DEED IS  
DONE THAT IS  
NOT RECORDED  
BY FATE,  
RAMON!





PROFESSOR MARKS DIED INSTANTLY, HIS NECK BROKEN IN THE FALL. DEAN SUFFERED A BRAIN CONCUSSION AND LAY IN A COMA IN THE HOSPITAL. RAMON BLAGDON EXULTED IN HIS NEW POWER AND PLANNED NEW EXPERIMENTS...

I WAS SORRY TO HEAR OF YOUR FATHER'S ACCIDENT, LOIS! WHEN YOU'RE ALONE, I HOPE YOU WILL TURN TO ME FOR COMFORT AND ADVICE!



I DON'T EXPECT TO BE ALONE! I'M SURE FATHER WILL RECOVER! AND, OF COURSE, I HAVE FRIENDS!

I HAVE ALWAYS HOPED YOU'D THINK OF ME AS A FRIEND, IF NOT MORE!



OH, COLBY DARLING-- I'M SO GLAD YOU CAME! THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT PROFESSOR BLAGDON I JUST CAN'T STAND!

HE DOESN'T TEACH PSYCHOLOGY ANY MORE -- HE TEACHES DRIVE! I HEARD YOUR FATHER WAS GETTING READY TO FIRE HIM!

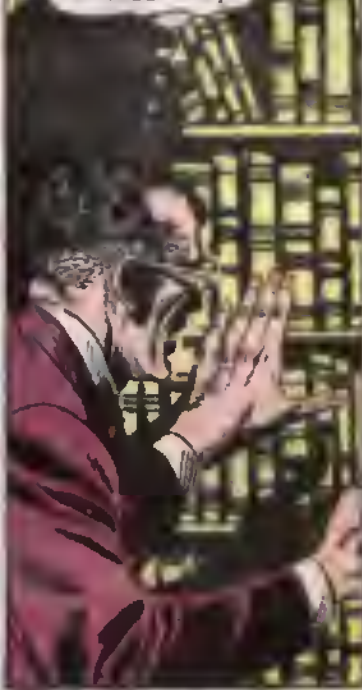


I'VE BEEN INFATUATED WITH LOIS EVER SINCE I CAME HERE TO TEACH! I WILL MAKE HER TURN TO ME!



RAMON BLAGDON RETURNED TO HIS ROOM...

THERE ARE POWERFUL, EVIL FORCES IN THE UNKNOWN! MY READING HAS SHOWN ME HOW MEN IN THE PAST MADE THESE POWERS WORK FOR THEM, WHEN THEY HAD ONCE LEARNED THE SECRETS I HAVE LEARNED!



NOW THAT MY BODY HAS BECOME THE INSTRUMENT OF MY INTELLIGENCE, I CAN PROJECT MY MIND INTO ANY PART OF THE WORLD I WISH! I CAN SUMMON FORTH THE POWERS THAT WILL ENABLE ME TO BRING ABOUT THE RESULTS I DESIRE!

YOU SHOULD HAVE READ BETWEEN THE LINES IN YOUR BOOKS, RAMON! THERE YOU WOULD HAVE LEARNED THAT THE MEN WHO CALLED UPON THE FORCES OF EVIL WERE ULTIMATELY DESTROYED BY THOSE FORCES!





AS RAMON, IN DEEP CONCENTRATION, TRIED TO PENETRATE THAT REALM OF DARKNESS THAT LIES BEYOND THE BORDERS OF MEN'S MINDS, THE EVIL FLAME WITHIN HIS BRAIN, IN OBEDIENCE TO SOME FEARFUL, UNNATURAL LAW, SUDDENLY BROUGHT INTO BEING THAT WHICH HE SOUGHT!

YOU CALLED US--AND WE ARE HERE!

RAMON HAD NOT EXPECTED ANYTHING AS HORRIBLE AS THE THINGS THAT NOW WRITHED IN FLAMES AROUND HIM!

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH US?

NOTHING!  
NOTHING!  
BE GONE!

THANK HEAVENS--  
TH--THEY'RE GONE!

IT MAY NOT BE QUITE SO EASY TO GET RID OF THEM NEXT TIME, RAMON!

YOU INTENDED TO ASK THEM FOR THE KIND OF WEALTH THAT WOULD TEMPT A GIRL LIKE LUIS AND MAKE HER NOTICE YOU/ YOU INTENDED TO ENLIST THEIR AID IN MAKING YOU YOUNG AND HANDSOME LIKE COLBY FERNAND!

BUT THEY FRIGHTENED YOU, DIDN'T THEY? AND YET YOU DESIRE TO FOLLOW IN THEIR STEPS!

I-I DO NOT NEED THEM/ I CAN SECURE WHAT I WANT WITHOUT THEM!

YOU SEE FOR YOURSELF THE POWER I HAVE/ I BROUGHT THEM FORTH--AND I SENT THEM BACK WHERE THEY CAME FROM!

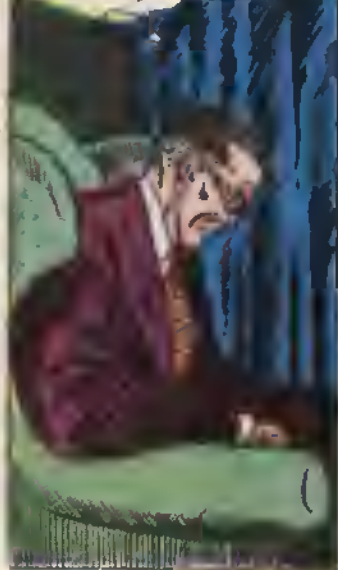
YOU HAVE THE POWER TO LOOK INTO THE FUTURE AND SEE YOUR OWN DESTINY/ LOOK NOW!

I DO NOT NEED TO LOOK/ I TOLD YOU I WOULD CHANGE MY DESTINY TO SUIT MYSELF!

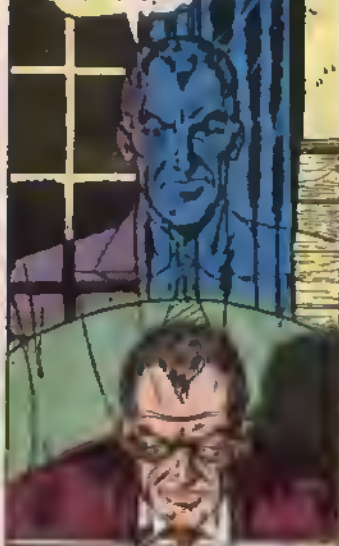
I WARN YOU-- YOU ARE HEADING TOWARD A FEARFUL DOOM!



I GOT RID OF THE CREATURES  
AND I GOT RID OF FATE! NOW  
I SHALL PROVE WHAT I  
CAN DO!



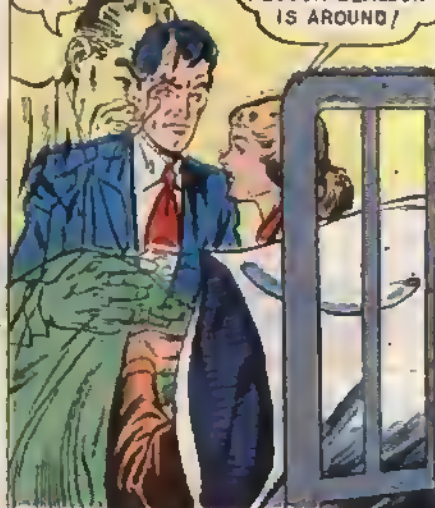
HA! EACH TIME IT BECOMES  
EASIER TO PROJECT MY MIND  
OUTSIDE OF MY BODY! I HAVE  
MUCH TO ACCOMPLISH  
TONIGHT!



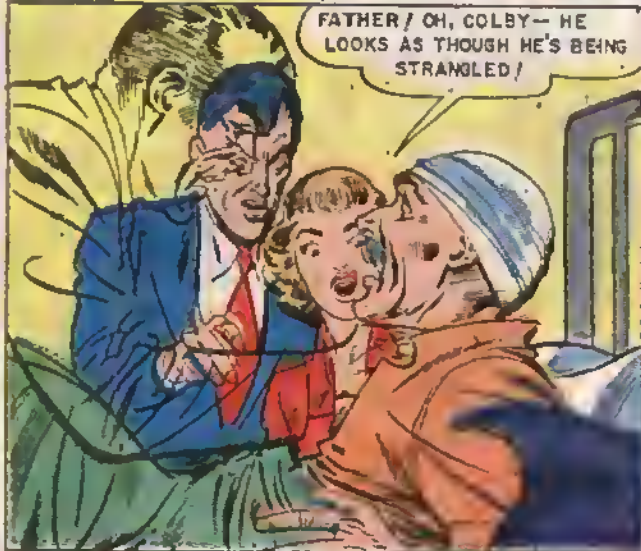
MOMENTS LATER, AT THE HOSPITAL...

SO YOU INTENDED  
TO FIRE ME, EH?  
NOW I WILL PUT  
YOU OUT OF THE  
WAY!

I FEEL FUNNY,  
COLBY-- LIKE I  
DO WHEN THAT  
DREADFUL PRO-  
FESSOR BLAGDON  
IS AROUND!



FATHER! OH, COLBY-- HE  
LOOKS AS THOUGH HE'S BEING  
STRANGLER!



YOUR FATHER  
IS DEAD,  
LOIS!

AND YOU, TOO, SHALL BE  
DEAD BEFORE MORNING,  
COLBY FERNAND! I HAVE  
GREAT PLANS!



I SHALL KILL COLBY!  
THEN I SHALL USE HIS  
BODY AS MY OWN, AND  
LOIS WILL NEVER KNOW  
THAT HER LOVER IS  
THE MAN SHE ONCE  
DESPISED!



TONIGHT-- AFTER I KILL HIM,  
AND THE SOUL LEAVES HIS BODY--  
MY MIND WILL TAKE CONTROL OF  
IT! WITH THE POWER I NOW  
POSSESS, I CAN BECOME RICH  
AND FAMOUS-- AND LOIS  
WILL MARRY ME!





I WILL WAIT IN COLBY'S ROOM FOR HIM! I'LL KILL HIM INSTANTLY! BUT THERE IS ONE PROBLEM--MY OWN BODY! I SHALL NOT BE RETURNING TO IT AGAIN, SO WHAT SHALL I DO WITH IT?



I MUST TAKE MY REGULAR BODY SOMEWHERE AND LEAVE IT, BEFORE MY MIND PROJECTS ITSELF TO COLBY'S ROOM, KILLS HIM, AND ENTERS HIS BODY! PERHAPS THOSE EVIL SPIRITS THAT I SUMMONED BEFORE COULD HELP!

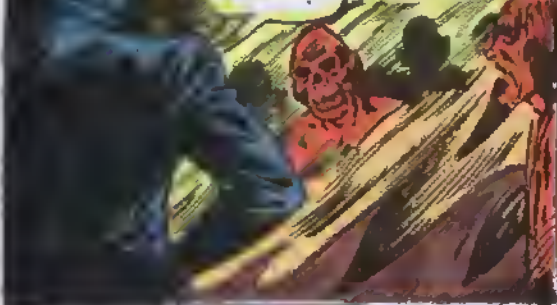


THE THOUGHT HAD NO SOONER GONE THROUGH RAMON'S BRAIN, THAN THE FORCES OF EVIL APPEARED AGAIN...

I—I DID NOT CALL YOU! THE I JUST THOUGHT ABOUT CALLING YOU! THE VIBRATIONS OF YOUR MIND ARE NOW SUCH, THAT YOUR FAINTEST THOUGHT OF US BRINGS US!



WHY SHOULD I BE AFRAID OF YOU? I HAVE PROVED MY POWER! WHY SHOULDN'T I USE THE SUPERNATURAL FORCES OF EVIL TO SERVE ME, WHEN I ALONE HAVE LEARNED THE SECRET OF CONTROLLING THEM?



STAND BACK FROM ME UNTIL I TELL YOU WHAT I WANT DONE! YOUR HEAT-- THE FLAMES!

DO NOT CRINGE FROM US, RAMON BLAGDON. YOU WILL SOON BE ONE OF US, BECAUSE YOU WISHED TO FOLLOW IN OUR PATH!



YOU LIE! I DID NOT CHOOSE YOUR COMPANY! I ONLY WISHED TO ADD TO MY POWER THROUGH YOU! I WILL NOT NEED YOU! SO GO BACK WHERE YOU CAME FROM!



CREATURES OF THE WORLD OF EVIL, THIS MAN WISHES TO DISPOSE OF HIS BODY! HE HAD IN MIND THAT YOU COULD HELP HIM!

NO! NO!





FOOLISH MORTAL/ YOU HAVE  
PRIDED YOURSELF ON THE MENTAL  
POWER YOU HAVE GAINED/ WHY  
HAVEN'T YOU LEARNED YOU CANNOT  
BORROW ANOTHER MAN'S BODY AND  
DISPOSE OF  
HIS SOUL/

THE FLAMES/  
LET ME GO/



YOU WERE STUPID INDEED,  
RAMON BLAGDON, TO NOT REALIZE  
THAT THE BRAIN THAT CONTROL-  
LED EVERYTHING WAS IN YOUR  
OWN BODY, AND IF YOU HAD SUC-  
CEEDED IN DESTROYING YOUR OWN  
BODY, WHAT POWER YOU  
POSSESSED WOULD HAVE  
GONE WITH IT/



I - I AM CONCENTRATING/ I AM  
TRYING TO SEND THESE EVIL  
BEINGS BACK INTO THE UNKNOWN  
WORLD, BUT THEY WILL NOT  
OBEY/ MY POWER IS GONE/



SOON...  
YES, SIR-- WE  
HEARD AN AWFUL  
SCREAM IN HERE,  
AND WHEN WE CAME  
RUNNING IN, HE WAS  
LIKE THIS-- LIKE HE'D  
SEEN SOMETHING  
HORRIBLE/



YES, RAMON, I AM READY TO WRITE THE  
ENDING TO YOUR STORY/ YOU ARE STEP-  
PING THROUGH THE PORTALS OF THE  
UNKNOWN, WHOSE MYSTERIES YOU DE-  
TERMINED TO MASTER/ BUT THE ONLY  
PORTALS OPEN TO YOU NOW, ARE  
ETERNAL PUNISHMENT AND  
TERROR/



AND SO THE SKEINS OF  
RAMON BLAGDON'S LIFE  
WERE UNRAVELED, AND HE  
FOUND THAT FOR SUCH AS  
HE, FATE HAS ALREADY  
WRITTEN A PAGE IN THE  
HEREAFTER/ NO MAN  
CAN ESCAPE HIS  
FATE/



THE END



# A Hand of FATE Mystery

#13

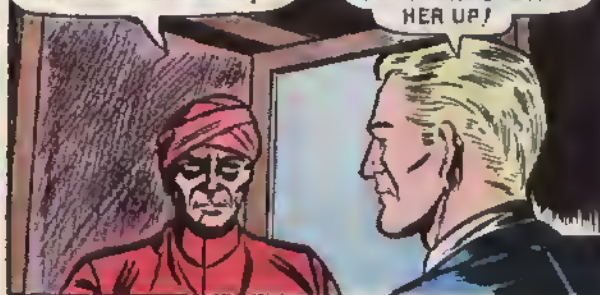
IN THE YEAR 1903, IN THE BRITISH ARMY STATIONED IN INDIA, TWO BROTHERS CAME UPON THE STATUE OF "SIVA" IN A TEMPLE SHRINE. OVERCOME WITH ITS STRANGE BEAUTY, THE TWO MEN TOOK THE IDOL AND SHIPPED IT BACK TO THEIR HOME IN ENGLAND. THE LOSS OF THE TEMPLE WORSHIPPERS' GOD CAUSED GREAT ANGUISH AND HATRED AMONG THE NATIVES, AND THE TWO BROTHERS WERE FORCED TO FLEE BACK TO ENGLAND...

BUT THE SHADOW OF INDIA FOLLOWED THEM BACK. ONE NIGHT IN LONDON THEY RECEIVED AN UNEXPECTED VISIT...

I AM RASHA, HIGH PRIEST OF THE TEMPLE FROM WHICH YOU HAVE STOLEN OUR IDOL / I HAVE COME TO TAKE IT BACK /

SORRY, OLD MAN / WE'VE GROWN FOND OF YOUR SIVA, AND WE DON'T INTEND GIVING HER UP!

YOU DON'T REALIZE THE DANGER YOU ARE IN / SIVA IS THE FOUR-ARMED GODDESS OF CREATION AND DESTRUCTION / HER VENGEANCE UPON YOU WILL BE TERRIBLE!



WHEN THE STRANGE VISITOR LEFT, THE TWO MEN RETIRED FOR THE NIGHT. BUT AN HOUR LATER...

GREAT SCOTT / THAT SOUNDS LIKE FRED / IT'S COMING FROM THE LIBRARY!



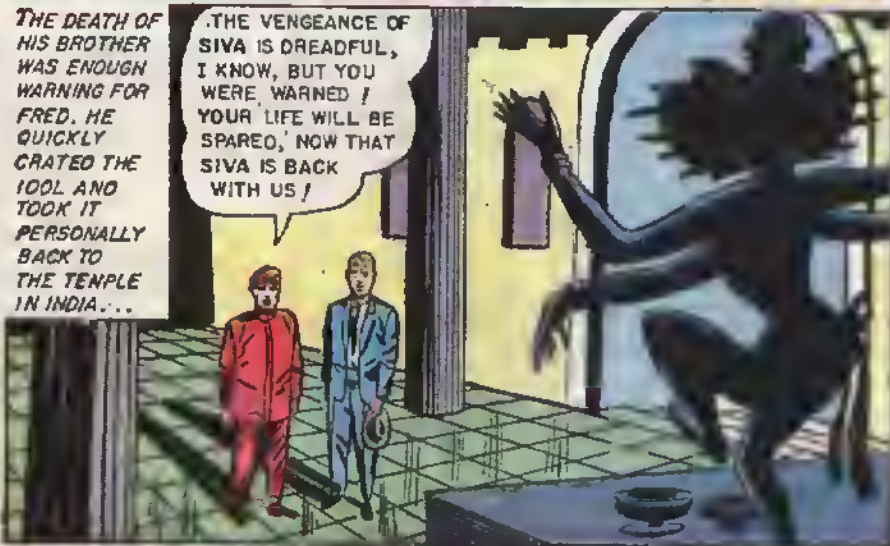
WHEN FRED REACHED THE LIBRARY, HE FOUND HIS BROTHER LOCKED IN A DEADLY EMBRACE IN THE ARMS OF SIVA!

FRED! THAT DEVILISH STATUE HAS KILLED HIM / B-BUT HOW COULD IT HAVE COME ALIVE?



THE DEATH OF HIS BROTHER WAS ENOUGH WARNING FOR FRED. HE QUICKLY GRATED THE IDOL AND TOOK IT PERSONALLY BACK TO THE TEMPLE IN INDIA...

'THE VENGEANCE OF SIVA IS DREADFUL, I KNOW, BUT YOU WERE WARNED / YOUR LIFE WILL BE SPARED, NOW THAT SIVA IS BACK WITH US /



MARTIN LEFT INDIA AND RETURNED HOME, STILL IN A DAZE OVER THE AWESOME SERIES OF EVENTS THAT TOOK HIS BROTHER'S LIFE / HE TOLD THE STORY TO MANY PEOPLE TO FIND SOME SORT OF EXPLANATION OF THE IDOL COMING TO LIFE, BUT NONE COULD GIVE A PLAUSIBLE ANSWER. SO THE EVENT WAS WRITTEN OFF AS ANOTHER STRANGE TALE IN THE ANNALS OF THE SUPERNATURAL!

THE END



# VISITOR FROM THE GRAVE

The midget's coffin was outlined against the darkening sky, and the four candles lit at the head and foot of the casket cast flickering shadows over the late summer foliage. A little distance away, the troupers of the Ferenczi circus clustered in small groups, discussing in hushed tones this tragedy that had befallen them.

They turned to watch furtively as Gudo strode up. They knew he'd borne no love for his midget twin brother, but they dared not speak to him. They'd tasted his anger and fury before, and now as they looked at his dark-browed countenance, they feared to break in upon his grief, lest he suddenly burst into violent, uncontrollable anger.

Gudo stood a long time before the casket, unmindful of the circus people around him. He looked on his dead brother's face, and it seemed to him that a slight, malicious smile twisted the corners of the dead midget's mouth. Involuntarily, Gudo stretched out his hand and touched the corpse's face. But it was cold and dead, and he recoiled under the sensation. There was nothing to fear now, he told himself. Gogo was gone, and he could plague him no longer.

Gudo turned to go, and then he hesitated. For some reason there seemed to be something missing, something incomplete about the body stretched out there. He turned swiftly back and examined the contents of the casket. What was it, he asked himself. And then the answer came to him. Gogo's baton, the peculiar gnarled staff with the heavy head of wrought silver was missing.

It had been their father's, and he had given it to Gogo because his fondness was greater for this misshapen, strange replica of his other son. Gudo was sure he'd given the baton to the undertaker with careful instructions that it was to be placed in the casket with Gogo, but now it was not in evidence.

"Shall we close the coffin now?"

Gudo whirled at the softly spoken words. Kesti, the strong man of the circus, stood at his side.

"No," Gudo ordered. "You are to touch nothing until I return."

Through some premonition that he could not define, Gudo hurried back to the tent he'd shared with Gogo. He brushed past the gathering shadows on the foliage and entered the tent and turned on the lamp.

There, gleaming dully in the light lay the baton. Fear for the first time coursed through him as he looked at the object. It lay there carelessly, as though it had been tossed down, and though he could not be sure he'd forgotten it, Gudo knew he had not left

it there.

He walked over and picked up the staff, and as he did so, he seemed to hear again his father's warning words, "I know that you and Gogo have no fondness for each other. But remember, Gudo, treat your brother well, for what befalls one will befall the other."

Now Gogo was dead, and Gudo knew fear. Quickly though, the remembrance faded, and Gudo hurried back to the bier. He strode past the circus people, ignoring their frightened faces, and went up to the coffin. There he placed the baton in Gogo's hand, tearing apart the stiffened fingers and then letting them clutch tightly around the rod.

"Close the coffin now," he said angrily. "Don't waste more time, but nail it down well. Come, let us get this over with!"

Immediately he started to force the lid down. It seemed to him that Gogo's hand tightened around the baton, but then the lid was snapped shut and he couldn't be sure.

They nailed the lid down and lowered it into the grave. Gudo stood there until the grave was filled, and then he made his way back to his tent.

It was done now, he thought. It was over with. No more would Gogo plague him, humiliate him and minimize his greatness by being what he was—a hideous replica of Gudo. Now Gudo was alone to carry on the fame of their father—the greatest of the circus performers. Never again would he have to share honors with his stunted gargoyles brother in their tight-rope act. Gudo, and Gudo alone would carry on the glorious tradition of their family.

Yes, he thought, it had been worth it. Just one slight twist of the taut rope while he and Gogo were doing their act; a slight movement he'd prepared himself for, and Gogo had gone plunging to the ground, the silver-headed baton flung wide in his fall. His neck had been broken, and he'd looked like a broken doll as he'd lain on the dirt floor of the ring.

But now Gudo couldn't sleep, and finally he left the darkened camp and went outside. He felt himself drawn to the circus arena, and finally he stood there near where Gogo had fallen. He looked upward toward the tight rope, and he was filled with the pride of his matchless feats. No one except Gogo could ever equal him—and now Gogo was dead.

Gudo started climbing up to the platform, suddenly filled with the need to walk out on that rope even if there was no one present to watch him. He



wanted to walk out to the middle of it, and feel himself the unequalled tight-rope performer of Hungary.

He was panting slightly when he reached the platform, and he stopped a moment to rest. All around him the night was quiet and peaceful. Finally he was ready, and he placed one foot out upon the rope.

He'd gone no farther when he drew back with alarm, his body tensed as for some unexpected blow. Under his foot he'd felt the rope tremble as though someone else walked upon that wire. His sensitive feet, trained all his life, had caught the movement and the vibration—the delicate twisting of the strand as someone stepped and balanced upon it.

He peered across the darkness. As his eyes became accustomed to the night, he could see nothing—the opposite platform and the wire were empty, and still beneath his touch he heard the awful approach.

Beads of perspiration broke out across his forehead as he began to struggle down the ladder. Whatever it was, whatever damnable trick his imagination was playing upon him, he knew he could not cross to the other side that night.

In the morning the camp came slowly to life. Gudo came outside into the fresh countryside, and the air smelled good. What had happened the night before seemed strange to him in the light of day. But still unwilling to admit his fancy had played tricks upon him, he walked out to Gogo's grave. The rich brown, upturned earth was packed firmly into a mound just as he had left it the night before, and it was evident that no one had touched it. Reassured then, he strolled back to the camp site.

He knew he must play the part of a grieving man, and his countenance was sober as he ate with the others. But his thoughts turned inwardly to the excitement of that afternoon's performance. He heard in his ears again the acclaim of the audience. The show had been well advertised, and he knew that soon people would flock in from the provinces to see him.

As soon as he could, he hurried back to his tent and prepared his clothes. He dressed himself in the elegant white satin and the embroidered red jacket. Then he added a black sash—in memory of Gogo; he thought wryly.

He was ready then, and he sauntered forth. As he headed toward the arena, the maestro Ferenczi hurried over to him. He placed a gentle, restraining hand on Gudo's arm.

"Gudo," he said. "There is no need for you to perform this afternoon. The news of your brother's death has spread, and people will understand if you do not go on."

For a moment Gudo was choked with rage and disappointment at the thought of being thwarted in this moment of triumph when he could at last perform alone. But then he gained control of himself.

"It is all right," he announced. "Gudo knows that circus people cannot afford themselves the luxury of grief. That I will save for my hours alone."

Ferenczi mopped his forehead worriedly. "All right, Gudo, if you feel able to. But if you wish to wait a while to recover, we will understand."

After he left, Gudo continued to the arena. He saw approvingly the large crowd. Fools, he thought contemptuously. They will have seen nothing until they saw Gudo perform.

Slowly Gudo climbed the ladder up to the platform. Then he looked down. Far below him were the frightened, awestruck people. Far below were the simple, strutting clowns and circus animals. Up here, close to the skies was Gudo—and he alone, powerful and fearless.

He heard the blaring of the trumpets distantly from the ground. He knew it was heralding his act. Not looking down or to the right or to the left, Gudo started across the rope. The moment of triumph would come when he reached the middle and did his daring somersault.

Carefully he put one foot in front of the other. He was nearing the middle of the rope when he felt it, the slight trembling underneath his feet even when he stood still, balancing carefully. He was afraid to look up, and yet he knew he must although he knew what he would see.

He brought his eyes straight in front of him, and he saw Gogo coming toward him. His misdeed brother's face was lighted with that same malicious smile he had last seen when he'd closed the coffin, and Gogo carried his head at that broken angle. In his hand he clutched the twisted baton.

"Wait for me, Gudo," Gogo called across the intervening space. "You cannot perform without me."

"Go back," Gudo shouted frantically to the dead man. "Go back or I'll be killed!"

But Gogo came slowly toward Gudo. For a moment Gudo stood frozen with horror, and then as Gogo drew close to him, Gogo stretched out the baton to touch him. It was then it happened. Gudo tried frantically to avoid the contact of the awful thing, and as he twisted away he fell.

The shocked crowds below saw only Gudo lose his balance and fall. They also heard his awful scream and the wailing. "No!" as he hit the ground and lay there motionless.

The circus performers rushed to the scene immediately. Gudo lay there a lifeless, broken thing as they approached him. His head was held peculiarly at an angle that indicated his neck had snapped. And clutched in Gudo's hand they saw the twisted baton with the silver wrought head that had so carefully been placed in Gogo's coffin!

THE END



# Devilish Dolls of DEATH

WADE FARMAN WAS IN VIENNA ON A SCHOLARSHIP, TAKING A POST GRADUATE COURSE IN MEDICINE. WHEN DR. EVERS KIEPERT, A YOUNG GERMAN SCIENTIST, TOLD HIM HE COULD RENT A ROOM FROM HIS AUNT, WHO RAN A DOLL SHOP IN ONE OF THE QUIANT OLD SECTIONS OF THE TOWN, IT SOUNDED LIKE A PERFECT SET-UP. BUT FROM THE BEGINNING, WADE FELT THAT SOME SINISTER POWER DWELT AMONG THE DOLLS, ALTHOUGH HE WAS UNAWARE THAT FATE HAD SOME STRANGE SURPRISES IN STORE. . .

GOOD EVENING, FRAU TEUFEL! DO YOU HAPPEN TO KNOW WHERE MISS NOVAL MIGHT BE? I HAVEN'T SEEN HER AROUND FOR SEVERAL DAYS!

I CANNOT KEEP TRACK OF ALL MY ROOMERS, HERR FARMAN / THEY GO AND COME AS THEY PLEASE /

THIS DOLL / WHY, IT'S A PERFECT IMAGE OF CAROLE NOVAL /

TO BE SURE / OTTO, MY HUSBAND, IS AN ARTIST / PEOPLE COME FROM ALL OVER TO HAVE DOLLS MADE IN THEIR OWN LIKENESSES / FRAULEIN NOVAL ORDERED THIS ONE SPECIALLY MADE /

YOUR DOLLS ARE CERTAINLY LIFE-LIKE, EVEN THE HORRIBLE ONES / THEY SEEM TO STARE, ALMOST THREATENINGLY / AND THIS ONE SEEMED TO FIX ITS EYES UPON ME, ALMOST AS IF IT WERE TRYING TO TELL ME SOMETHING /



YOU HAVE A VIVID IMAGINATION /  
NOW IF YOU WILL EXCUSE ME--  
I HAVE MUCH WORK AMONG THE  
DOLLS, AND A LIVING TO MAKE /

SORRY TO  
HAVE  
BOtherED  
YOU, FRAU  
TEUFEL /



AS WADE WENT BACK TO HIS ROOM, HE WAS  
TROUBLED

THE IDEA OF A DOLL SHOP  
BEING EVIL AND SINISTER IS  
CRAZY / BUT THAT DOLL  
THAT LOOKED LIKE  
CAROLE HOVAL / IT WAS  
UNCANNY / AND THE  
DRESS THE OLD LADY  
WAS MAKING FOR IT  
WAS EXACTLY LIKE  
THE ONE CAROLE WORE  
WHEN I TOOK HER TO  
DINNER THE OTHER  
NIGHT /



JUST A FEW BLOCKS AWAY THERE ARE MODERN  
SHOPS, LIGHTS AND GAIETY. BUT TO THE LEFT  
OF THE MAIN THOROUGHFARES, YOU COULD FIND  
YOURSELF IN A LABYRINTH OF SMALL OLD  
STREETS, AND IT IS HERE, IN A PLACE WHERE  
YOU WOULD LEAST EXPECT TO FIND IT, THAT  
MONSTROUS AND GHASTLY DEEDS ARE DONE /



IN AN UNDERGROUND ROOM BENEATH THE  
DOLL SHOP

LIKE SOME OF THE OTHERS, LIFE IS NOT  
QUITE OUT OF YOUR BODY YET, CAROLE HOVAL,  
SO YOU WILL SUFFER EVEN MORE UNTIL YOU  
LEARN TO DO OUR WILL / IT IS UNFORTUNATE  
THAT YOU STUMBLED UPON OUR SECRET  
OF DOLL-MAKING /



SINCE YOU ALWAYS PREFERRED THE COMPANY OF  
WADE FARMAN TO MINE, I SHALL GIVE YOU THE  
PLEASURE OF BRINGING HIM INTO OUR RANKS / BY  
TOMORROW NIGHT, UNCLE OTTO WILL HAVE FINISHED  
THE DOLL THAT WILL BECOME WADE FARMAN / NOW,  
AUNT FRONIA--UNCLE OTTO--GIVE CAROLE  
ANOTHER LESSON IN OBEDIENCE /

WE SHALL  
INDEED, DEAR  
EVERS /  
HEE HEE /



EEEEOWWWWWW!  
NO! NO!  
NO MORE!  
I WILL DO AS  
YOU BID /





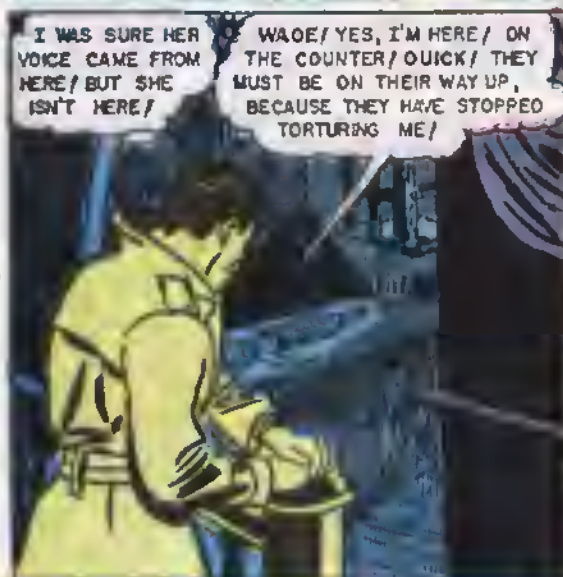


WADE FARMAN WAS AWAKENED FROM A TROUBLED SLEEP...

I HEARD A WOMAN SCREAM! I'VE HEARD SOUNDS LIKE THAT BEFORE IN THE NIGHT--GROANS AND SCREAMS--AND CAROLE SAID SHE HAD, TOO! BUT WHEN WE SPOKE TO FRAU TEUFEL AND HER HUSBAND, THEY ALWAYS SAID WE WERE DREAMING!



BUT I'D SWEAR THIS WAS CAROLE'S VOICE! IT SEEMED TO COME FROM THE DOLL SHOP!



I WAS SURE HER VOICE CAME FROM HERE! BUT SHE ISN'T HERE!

WAOE/YES, I'M HERE/ ON THE COUNTER/QUICK! THEY MUST BE ON THEIR WAY UP, BECAUSE THEY HAVE STOPPED TORTURING ME!



WH-WHAT FIENDISH THING IS THIS? YOUR VOICE, CAROLE --COMING FROM THE DOLL!

DO NOT WAIT FOR EXPLANATIONS/HURRY! TAKE ME AWAY! AND IN OTTO'S WORKSHOP-- YOU MUST GET THE DOLL HE IS MAKING OF YOU! WHEN HE IS FINISHED, YOU, TOO, WILL BE IN THEIR POWER!



SUDDENLY, A SHRILL VOICE ECHOED THROUGH THE DOLL SHOP!

MASTERS/MASTERS/COME QUICKLY! THE MAN TAKES THE NEW GIRL-DOLL YOU HAVE ADDED TO OUR RANKS!



IF WADE FARMAN HAS LEARNED OUR SECRET, WE MUST KILL HIM IMMEDIATELY!





I DON'T UNDERSTAND /  
WHAT MONSTROUS UN-  
NATURAL THING IS THIS?

THEY COME / PUT ME  
IN YOUR POCKET / GET  
OUT FROM THIS  
TERRIBLE PLACE /



INCREDULOUS AND SHOCKED, WADE TURNED TO FLEE  
BUT NOT QUICKLY ENOUGH /

EVERS KIEPERT /  
SO THIS IS YOUR  
WORK /

FOOL / I KNOW  
MANY THINGS SCIENCE  
NEVER DREAMED OF / CLIENTS  
PAY ME HUGE SUMS TO GET RID  
OF UNWANTED RELATIVES OR  
FRIENDS / SOME WOULD THUS  
BENEFIT BY AN INHERI-  
TANCE. OTHERS ARE  
MOTIVATED BY VENGEANCE /



OHH /

SET THE DOLLS  
AFTER THEM,  
IDIOT /



AFTER HIM,  
DOLLS OF  
DEATH /

AH YAH  
AH  
YAH /

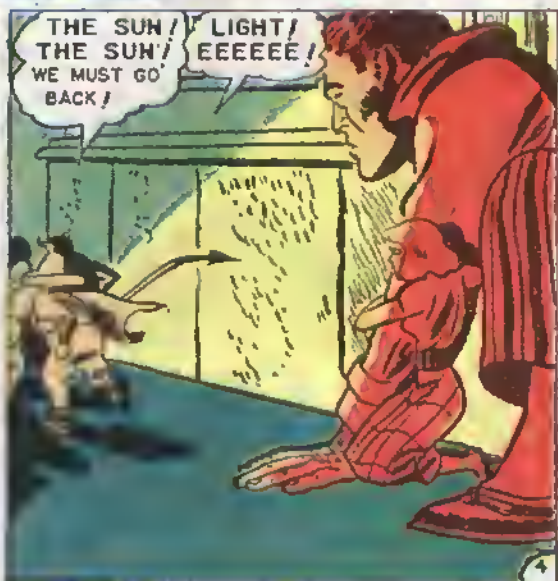


IT—IT'S DEVILISH / THEY'RE  
TRIPPING ME / I CAN'T  
SHAKE THEM LOOSE /



OHHHH /

WADE / THE SUN IS COMING  
UP / LIFE GOES FROM THEM WHEN  
THE SUN RISES / POWER CAN  
COME TO THEM ONLY  
IN DARKNESS /



THE SUN /  
THE SUN /  
WE MUST GO  
BACK /

LIGHT /  
EEEEEE /



MY POWER TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU WILL SOON BE GONE, WADE--AND I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN I WAS BEYOND SAVING / BUT YOU MUST SAVE YOURSELF / YOU MUST GO BACK AND GET THE DOLL OF YOU, WHICH OTTO IS MAKING /

CAROLE--I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS HORRIBLE THING /

THAT DEVIL DOLL WHO BETRAYED US--AND SOME OF THE OTHER HORRIBLE DOLLS--ARE SPIRITS THAT HAVE NEVER INHABITED A BODY, AND ARE WILLING TO DWELL IN WHATEVER FORMS THE TEUFELS AND EVERS GIVE THEM / THEY ARE WORSE THAN THOSE OF US WHO ARE TAKEN FROM OUR HUMAN FORMS, AND TORTURED UNTIL WE LEARN TO DO THE EVIL REQUIRED OF US, AND HAVE NO MORE SOULS /

YOU MUST... MUST...

YES, CAROLE-- WHAT MUST I DO?

BUT AS THE SUN CAME UP, CAROLE BECAME A LIFELESS OBJECT IN HIS HAND, AN INANIMATE DOLL THAT EVEN WADE FOUND IT HARD TO BELIEVE HAD EVER SPOKEN TO HIM...

IF I TELL THIS TALE TO ANYONE, THEY WOULD THINK I'M INSANE / DOLLS WHO ATTACK PEOPLE / AND IF I TELL THEM AT THE MEDICAL SCHOOL ABOUT OR. EVERS KIEPERT, THEY WOULD BE SURE I'D LOST MY MIND /

MEANWHILE, BACK IN OTTO TEUFEL'S WORKSHOP...

HURRY, UNCLE OTTO / BY TONIGHT WE MUST HAVE THE DOLL READY, SO WADE FARMAN CAN BECOME ANOTHER OF OUR SOULLESS SLAVES /

WHILE UNCLE OTTO FINISHES FARMAN'S DOLL, WE WILL TORTURE THE REBELLIOUS SPIRIT OUT OF YOU, CAROLE NOVAL / BY THE TIME YOUR DOLL RETURNS TO US, YOU WILL BE AS OBEDIENT AS THE OTHERS, AND YOU'LL REGRET YOU EVER SPURNED MY LOVE /

IN DESPERATION, WADE RETURNED TO THE DOLL SHOP...

I'VE GOT TO SEE THIS THING THROUGH / I'M GOING TO GET MY CLOTHES--TAKE A LOOK AT THIS DOLL OTTO IS MAKING OF ME--AND SEE WHAT I CAN DO /

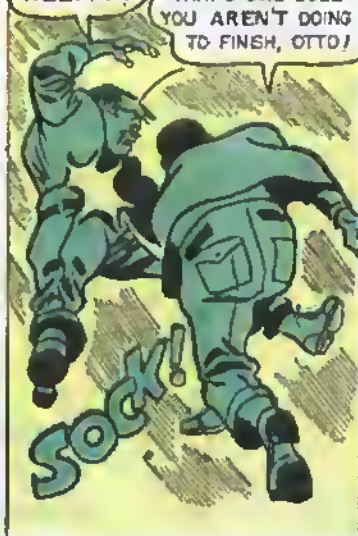


WADE GOT UPSTAIRS TO HIS ROOM, PACKED HIS CLOTHES, AND DRESSED HIMSELF. THEN, WITH CAROLE'S DOLL STILL IN HIS POCKET, HE RETURNED TO OTTO'S WORKSHOP.



HELPPP!

THAT'S ONE DOLL YOU AREN'T DOING TO FINISH, OTTO!



HA! WE WERE EXPECTING YOU, MY FRIEND!

HEE/ HEE/



OWW!

HEE/ HEE/ HEE/



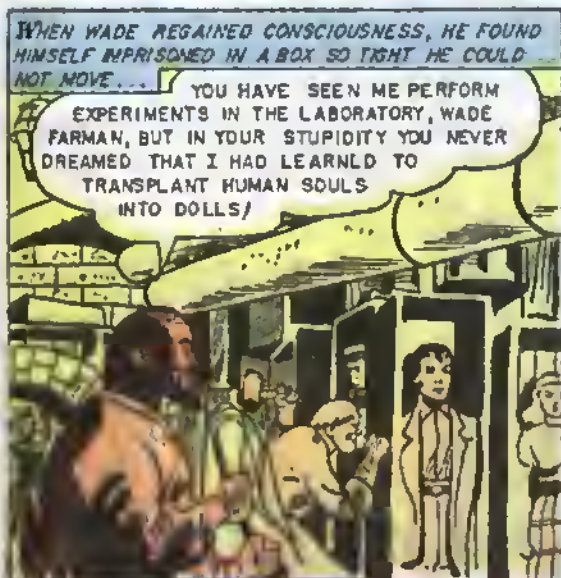
THE DOLL OF THE GIRL WAS IN HIS POCKET/NOW TOGETHER THEY CAN LEARN WHAT IT MEANS TO TRY AND OUTWIT US!

AND BELIEVE ME, DEAR AUNT, THEY SHALL LEARN!



WHEN WADE REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS, HE FOUND HIMSELF IMPRISONED IN A BOX SO TIGHT HE COULD NOT MOVE...

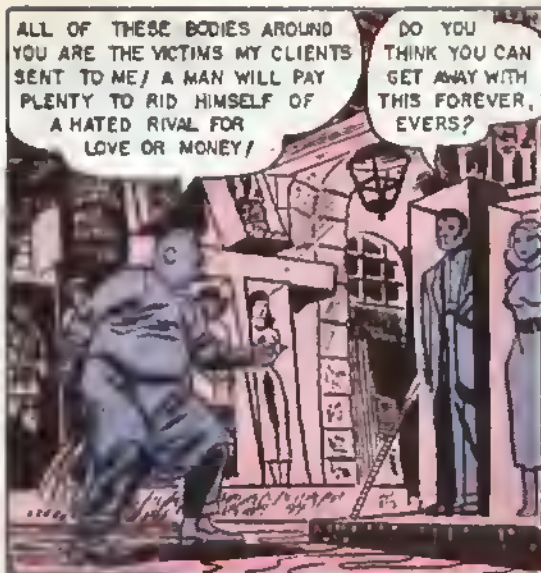
YOU HAVE SEEN ME PERFORM EXPERIMENTS IN THE LABORATORY, WADE FARMAN, BUT IN YOUR STUPIDITY YOU NEVER DREAMED THAT I HAD LEARNED TO TRANSPLANT HUMAN SOULS INTO DOLLS!



NOW YOU ARE ABOUT TO TAKE PART IN MY GREAT ACHIEVEMENT / WHAT A PITY THAT YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ENJOY IT!

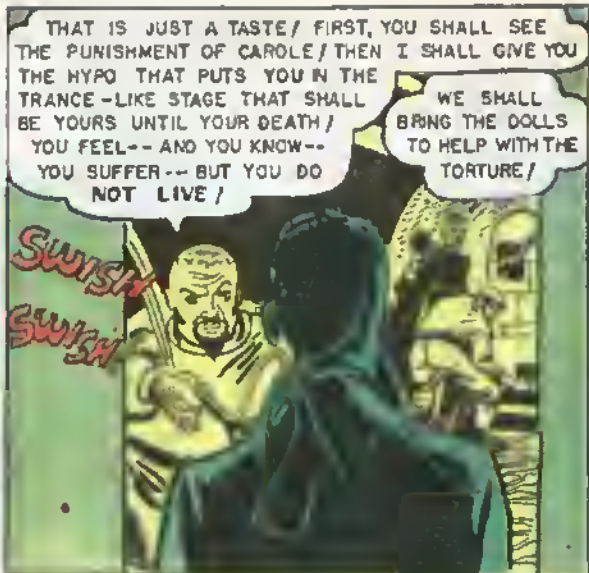






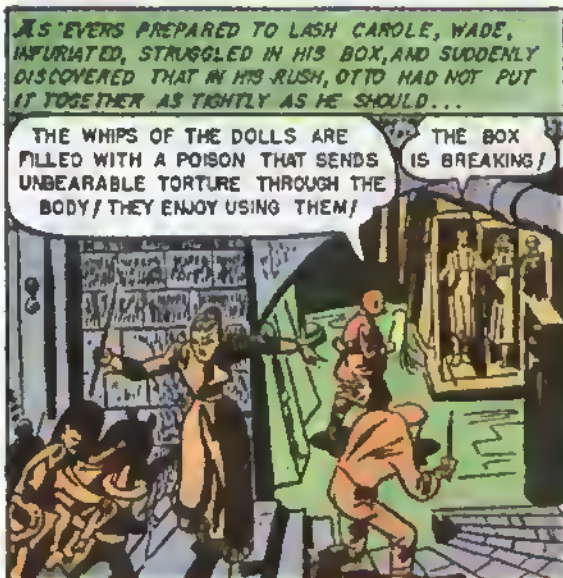
ALL OF THESE BODIES AROUND YOU ARE THE VICTIMS MY CLIENTS SENT TO ME/ A MAN WILL PAY PLENTY TO RID HIMSELF OF A HATED RIVAL FOR LOVE OR MONEY/

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH THIS FOREVER, EVERS?



THAT IS JUST A TASTE/ FIRST, YOU SHALL SEE THE PUNISHMENT OF CAROLE/ THEN I SHALL GIVE YOU THE HYPO THAT PUTS YOU IN THE TRANCE-LIKE STAGE THAT SHALL BE YOURS UNTIL YOUR DEATH/ YOU FEEL-- AND YOU KNOW-- YOU SUFFER-- BUT YOU DO NOT LIVE/

WE SHALL BRING THE DOLLS TO HELP WITH THE TORTURE/



AS EVERS PREPARED TO LASH CAROLE, WADE, INFURIATED, STRUGGLED IN HIS BOX, AND SUDDENLY DISCOVERED THAT IN HIS RUSH, OTTO HAD NOT PUT IT TOGETHER AS TIGHTLY AS HE SHOULD...

THE WHIPS OF THE DOLLS ARE FILLED WITH A POISON THAT SENDS UNBEARABLE TORTURE THROUGH THE BODY/ THEY ENJOY USING THEM/

THE BOX IS BREAKING/



THEN, BREAKING OUT OF HIS BOX, WADE GRABBED ONE OF THE TORTURE STICKS AND SPRANG AT EVERS...



AS THE LAST BREATH OF LIFE LEFT EVERS, THE DOLLS SUDDENLY DROPPED WITHOUT POWER, AND FEELING THE POISONED LASH, THE TEUFELS FELL LIFELESS/

EYAAHHH!

E OWWW!

A TASTE OF YOUR OWN MEDICINE/



WITH THE EVIL POWER THAT HAD MADE THEM LIVE, NOW DESTROYED, THE DOLLS HAD BECOME IN-ANIMATE CREATURES AGAIN. THE BODIES FROM WHICH THEY HAD DRAWN LIFE NOW BECAME NOTHING. AND WHEN WADE FINALLY FREED CAROLE, HE REALIZED HE WAS TOO LATE/

POOR CAROLE/ BUT AT LEAST YOU ARE AT PEACE/ NO EVIL POWER CAN FORCE YOUR SPIRIT TO BE A SLAVE TO ITS CRUEL WHIMS/ AND ALL THOSE OTHERS-- THEY TOO ARE FREED AT LAST/

THE END



# Goose? or Nest?

## WHICH WILL YOU HAVE ?

For some reason, the goose egg stands for zero . . . nothing.

The nest egg, however, stands for a tidy sum of money, set aside for your own or your children's future.

It's hardly necessary to ask you which you'd prefer.

But it is necessary to ask *yourself* what you are doing to make sure you *don't* end up with a goose egg instead of a nest egg ten years from now.

The simple, easy, and obvious thing to do is to buy U. S. Savings Bonds.

Buy them regularly, automatically, on a

plan that pays for them out of the month-to-month income you make today.

Millions of Americans have adopted this practically painless way to save up a nice nest egg for the needs and wants of the future.

In 10 years they get back \$40 for every \$30 invested in U. S. Savings Bonds—bonds as safe and solid as the Statue of Liberty.

There's a special Savings Bond Plan for *you*. Ask your employer or banker about it today . . . *and get started now*.

You'll soon realize it's one of the most important and comforting things you ever did!

### Automatic saving is sure saving—U.S. Savings Bonds



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# An Amazing NEW HEALTH SUPPORTER BELT

For men in their 30's, 40's, 50's  
who want to  
**LOOK SLIMMER**  
and  
**FEEL YOUNGER**



**POSTURE BAD?**  
Got a "Bay Window"?



**DO YOU ENVY MEN**  
who can  
**'KEEP ON THEIR FEET'?**

and then he got a  
**"CHEVALIER" ...**



**YOU NEED A**  
**"CHEVALIER"!**

**DOES** a bulging "bay window" make you look and feel years older than you really are? Then here, at last, is the answer to your problem! "Chevalier", the wonderful new adjustable health supporter belt is scientifically constructed to help you look and feel years younger!

## The CHEVALIER

**LIFTS AND FLATTENS YOUR BULGING "BAY WINDOW"**

Why go on day after day with an "old-man's" mid-section bulge ... or with a tired back that needs posture support? Just see how "Chevalier" brings you vital control where you need it most! "Chevalier" has a built-in strap. You adjust the belt the way you want. Presto! Your "bay-window" bulge is lifted in ... Retained out—yet you feel wonderfully comfortable!

**FRONT ADJUSTMENT**  
Works quick as a flash! Simply adjust the strap and presto! The belt is perfectly adjusted to your greatest comfort!



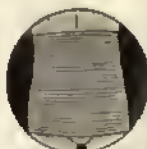
**TWO-WAY S-T-R-E-T-C-H WONDER CLOTH**  
Firmly holds in your flabby abdomen yet it s-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-s as you breathe, bend, stoop, after meals, etc.

**DETACHABLE POUCH**

Air-cooled! Scientifically designed and made to give wonderful support and protection!

**Healthful, Enjoyable Abdominal Control**

It's great! You can wear "Chevalier" all day long. Will not bind or make you feel constricted. That's because the two-way s-t-r-e-t-c-h cloth plus the front adjustment bring you personalized fit. The "Chevalier" is designed according to scientific facts of healthful posture control. It's made by experts to give you the comfort and healthful "lift" you want. Just see all the wonderful features below. And remember—you can get the "Chevalier" on FREE TRIAL. Mail the coupon right now!



**REAR VIEW FITS SNUG AT SMALL & BACK**  
Firm, comfortable support. Feels good!

**FREE Extra Pouch.** The Chevalier has a detachable pouch made of a soft, comfortable fabric that absorbs perspiration. So that you can change it regularly we include an extra pouch. Limited offer. Order yours today.

**FREE TRIAL OFFER**

**SEND NO MONEY: MAIL COUPON**

**RONNIE SALES, INC. Dept. 9311-E**  
487 Broadway, New York 13, N. Y.

Send me for 10 days' FREE TRIAL a CHEVALIER HEALTH-SUPPORTER BELT. I will pay postmen \$3.98 (plus postage) with the understanding that includes my FREE pouch. In 10 days, I will either return CHEVALIER to you and you will return my money, or otherwise my payment will be a full and final purchase price.

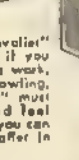
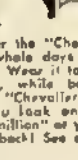
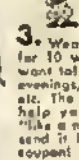
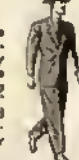
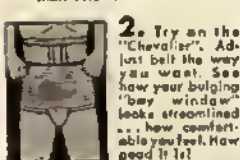
My waist measure is \_\_\_\_\_  
(Send stating the size of your waist if no tape measure is handy)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

City and Zone \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Save 45¢ postage. We pay postage if you enclose payment now. Same Free Trial and refund privilege.

1. You risk nothing! Just mail coupon—be sure to give name and address, also waist measure, etc. — and mail TODAY!



2. Try on the "Chevalier". Adjust belt the way you want. See how your bulging "bay window" looks streamlined ... how comfortable you feel. How good it is!

3. Wear the "Chevalier" for 10 whole days if you want to! Wear it to work, evening, while bowling, etc. The "Chevalier" must help you look and feel "like a million" as you can send it back! See offer in coupon!

**RONNIE SALES, INC., Dept. 9311-E 487 Broadway, N. Y. 13, N. Y.**